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FROM: Guatemala City

TO: Secretary of State

NO. 256, September 8, 7 p.m.

PRIORITY

SENT DEPARTMENT 256; REPEATED INFORMATION PRIORITY MEXICO CITY 20

In talk with Foreign Minister Salazar today I explained about Guatemalan Government's policy on asylees explaining I had been confused by circumstance that President Castillo Armas in Salazar's presence had agreed to Department's proposal for making renewed effort to prevent dispersion of Communists and other undesirables throughout hemisphere and that I had subsequently learned through newspapers that safe conducts were being issued to all asylees.

Salazar, obviously embarrassed, said that until recently he had issued safe conducts only to persons of minor importance until about five days ago Mexican Ambassador had visited Castillo and asked that asylees be cleared out of Embassy before September 16, Mexico's national holiday. Subsequently, Castillo had instructed that safe conducts be issued to all asylees without distinction. Salazar said he had reminded Castillo of his agreement with me but Castillo had replied that nothing had been done and plan must have failed.

I replied it was extremely embarrassing for me and my government to have policy changed in this manner without our being informed and that our Ambassador in Mexico had been conducting negotiations with Mexican authorities and planned to see President tomorrow. In conclusion I said with reference to Mexican Ambassador it was interesting to know whose advice Castillo accepted. Salazar repeatedly said he was sorry but feared nothing more could be done on this matter now.

PEURIFOY

SMD:LJ/11

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